

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A method of forming a seam between substrates comprising:
  - providing a first substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface, said upper and said lower surfaces of said first substrate defining at least one edge;
  - providing a second substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface, said upper and said lower surfaces of said second substrate defining at least one edge;
  - overlapping said edge of said first substrate with said edge of said second substrate;
  - positioning a first tape portion adjacent to said first substrate such that said first tape portion is placed in operative communication with said upper and said lower surfaces of said first substrate, said first tape portion comprising a thermoplastic material that is melt-flowable when subjected to a certain amount of heat and pressure;
  - positioning a second tape portion adjacent to said second substrate such that said second tape portion is placed in operative communication with said upper and lower surfaces of said second substrate, said second tape portion comprising a thermoplastic material that is melt-flowable when subjected to a certain amount of heat and pressure;
  - forming an adhesive bond and a physical bond between said first tape portion and said first substrate and between said second tape portion and said second substrate.
2. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein said first tape portion and said second tape portion are attached together.
3. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein said first tape portion and said second tape portion are continuous.
4. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein said first tape portion and said second tape portion are unattached.

5. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising heating said first tape portion to a first predetermined temperature.
6. A method as defined in claim 5, wherein said first predetermined temperature is between about 10°C below the thermal melting temperature of said thermoplastic material to about 50°C above the thermal melting temperature of said thermoplastic material.
7. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising heating said second tape portion to a second predetermined temperature.
8. A method as defined in claim 7, wherein said second predetermined temperature is between about 10°C below the thermal melting temperature of said thermoplastic material to about 50°C above the thermal melting temperature of said thermoplastic material.
9. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising subjecting said first tape portion and said second tape portion to pressure.
10. A method as defined in claim 9, wherein said pressure is between about 40 pounds per square inch to about 120 pounds per square inch.
11. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising subjecting said first tape portion to simultaneous heat and pressure and subjecting said second tape portion to simultaneous heat and pressure.
12. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein said first substrate and said second substrates are fabrics.
13. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of said tape portions contains multiple layers.
14. A method as defined in claim 12, wherein one of said layers contains a thermoplastic material having a first thermal melting temperature and another of said layers contains a thermoplastic material having a second thermal melting temperature, said second thermal

melting temperature being greater than said first thermal melting temperature.

15. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising folding said tape portions into a certain shape.

16. A method as defined in claim 15, wherein said tape portions are folded into a z-shaped configuration.

17. A method as defined in claim 15, wherein said tape portions are folded prior to being placed adjacent to said first substrate and said second substrate.

18. A method as defined in claim 15, wherein said tape portions are folded after being placed adjacent to said first substrate and said second substrate.

19. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising imparting a three-dimensional topography on at least one of said surfaces of said first substrate.

20. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising imparting a three-dimensional topography on at least one of said surfaces of said second substrate.

21. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein said edge of at least one of said substrates is non-linear.

22. A method of forming a seam between substrates comprising:  
providing a first substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface, said upper and said lower surfaces of said first substrate defining at least one edge;

providing a second substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface, said upper and said lower surfaces of said second substrate defining at least one edge;

overlapping said edge of said first substrate with said edge of said second substrate;

positioning a first tape portion adjacent to said first substrate such that said first tape portion is placed in operative communication with said upper and said lower surfaces of said first substrate, said first tape portion comprising a thermoplastic material that is melt-flowable when subjected to a certain amount of heat and pressure;

positioning a second tape portion adjacent to said second substrate such that said second tape portion is placed in operative communication with said upper and lower surfaces of said second substrate, said second tape portion comprising a thermoplastic material that is melt-flowable when subjected to a certain amount of heat and pressure;

folding said tape into a z-shaped configuration;

subjecting said first tape portion to simultaneous heat and pressure;

subjecting said second tape portion to simultaneous heat and pressure; and

forming an adhesive bond and a physical bond between said first tape portion and said first substrate and between said second tape portion and second substrate.

23. A method as defined in claim 22, wherein said tape portions are folded prior to being placed adjacent to said first substrate and said second substrate.

24. A method as defined in claim 22, wherein said tape portions are folded after being placed adjacent to said first substrate and said second substrate.

25. A method as defined in claim 22, wherein said first substrate and said second substrates are fabrics.

26. A method as defined in claim 22, further comprising imparting a three-dimensional topography on at least one of said surfaces of said first substrate.

27. A method as defined in claim 22, further comprising imparting a three-dimensional topography on at least one of said surfaces of said second substrate.

28. A method as defined in claim 22, wherein said edge of at least one of said substrates is non-linear.

29. A seam for joining two or more substrates of an article, said seam comprising:

a first substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface, said upper and said lower surfaces of said first substrate defining at least one edge;

a second substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface, said upper and said lower surfaces of said second substrate defining at least one edge, said edge of said second substrate overlapping said edge of said first substrate;

a first tape portion comprising a thermoplastic material that is melt-flowable when subjected to a certain amount of heat and pressure, said first tape portion being adhesively and physically bonded to said upper and said lower surfaces of said first substrate;

a second tape portion comprising a thermoplastic material that is melt-flowable when subjected to a certain amount of heat and pressure, said second tape portion being adhesively and physically bonded to said upper and said lower surfaces of said second substrate.

30. A seam as defined in claim 29, wherein said first and said second substrates are fabrics.

31. A seam as defined in claim 29, wherein said edge of at least one of said substrates is non-linear.

32. A seam as defined in claim 29, wherein at least one of said surfaces of said first substrate has a three-dimensional topography.

33. A seam as defined claim 29, wherein at least one of said surfaces of said second substrate has a three-dimensional topography.
  34. A seam as defined in claim 29, wherein at least one of said tape portions comprises polyurethane.
  35. A seam as defined in claim 29, wherein at least one of said tape portions contains multiple layers.
  36. A seam as defined in claim 35, wherein one of said layers contains a thermoplastic material having a first thermal melting temperature and another of said layers contains a thermoplastic material having a second thermal melting temperature, said second thermal melting temperature being greater than said first thermal melting temperature.
  37. A seam as defined in claim 29, wherein said tape portions form a z-shaped configuration.
  38. A seam as defined in claim 29, wherein said first tape portion and said second tape portion are attached together.
  39. A seam as defined in claim 29, wherein said first tape portion and said second tape portion are continuous.
  40. A seam as defined in claim 29, wherein said first tape portion and said second tape portion are unattached.